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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2498  
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 3951  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6992  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 9794  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ SEP QUITO 0711  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0869  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHMFIS/CIA USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHOND/DIRONDCP WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 003876

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/11/2014

TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR PTER CO PE

SUBJECT: PERU TO FARC WEAPONS SMUGGLING RING BROKEN-UP

Classified By: PolCouns Alexis Ludwig Reason: 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (U) Summary: Peruvian police have busted an arms smuggling ring that planned to ship weapons and munitions to the FARC in Colombia. During the operation, authorities confiscated over 3,500 rounds of ammunition and five air-to-surface missiles reportedly diverted from Peruvian military stockpiles. This is the most recent of four cases in the past half year in which Peruvian police have stopped arms trafficking destined for the FARC. End Summary.

¶2. (U) In a September 27 press conference Minister of Interior Pilar Mazzetti and Director General of the Peruvian national police (PNP) Luis Montoya announced that three suspects, including a PNP officer, were detained for arms trafficking in the previous days. All major media reported that PNP officer David Luza Aquino, Luz Zonia Gonzalez Perez (aka "Lulu"), and Juan Guerra Aldana were arrested on September 22 while transporting 3,520 rounds of ammunition (caliber 7.62 x 53) and five air-to-surface missiles. (Note: Five rockets were confiscated. Contrary to press reports, no surface-to-air missiles were found. Missiles were, in fact, air-to-ground. End Note.) Mazzetti and Montoya confirmed that the stolen arms were to be sold to FARC guerrillas. According to press reports, the traffickers planned to transport the munitions, which were stolen from a military base in southern Peru, via Ecuador. Montoya told the press that the three detainees could be accused of collaboration with terrorists and receive up to 15 years in prison.

¶3. (U) In an interview with reporters, Mazzetti explained that the police's most recent success was linked to three other similar PNP operations since May, which together had netted some 43,000 rounds of ammunition, 32 grenades, and 20 rifles. According to press reports, eight additional suspects were detained in these operations, including two noncommissioned army officers.

¶4. (C) Comment: Media reports of the busted arms smuggling ring accurately reflect information gathered in sensitive channels, and represent a media coup for Peruvian security forces and a significant advance for our shared counterterrorism interests. However, the press was incorrect in their characterization of the rockets. End Comment.

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